Met Office

August 2008

The averaging period used for the following assessment was 1961-1990.

UK overview

Average daily maximum temperatures ranged from about 1 °C below average across south-western areas of the UK to about 1 °C above average across some eastern coastal areas of England. Average daily minimum temperatures were generally 1 to 2 °C above average across the UK. It was a very wet month across much of the UK with widespread flooding reported in Northern Ireland and parts of eastern Scotland. Northern Ireland had its wettest August in a series back to 1914. It was also an exceptionally dull month across much of the UK, with only the far north of Scotland recording above average sunshine.

Faversham (Kent) recorded a maximum temperature of 27.5 °C on 6th. Altnaharra (Highland) recorded a minimum temperature of 0.5 °C on 15th. Trassey Slievenaman (County Down) recorded 96.0 mm of rainfall on 16th. A wind gust of 79 mph was recorded at Needles Old Battery (Isle of Wight) on 13th.

England diary of highlights

Very unsettled with heavy rain or showers for much of the month. It was also an exceptionally dull month.

1st to 6th: It was very unsettled with low pressure covering the UK for the first five days of the month. There were showers or longer spells of rain and some of these were heavy with scattered thunderstorms. Temperatures were generally near or a little below average, but it became locally warm in any sunnier breaks in the east and south-east. On the 6th, low pressure moved to the north-west for a time and allowed some warmer weather to edge into central and south-east England for a time. The temperature reached 27.5 °C at Faversham (Kent) on the 6th. However, later in the day, these higher temperatures helped to spark off a few heavy thunderstorms across the far south-east.

7th to 11th: Low pressure to the north-west brought generally south-westerly winds, with rain or showers at times, some heavy and thundery. Heavy thunderstorms on the 7th gave some torrential rain across East Anglia, with Marham (Norfolk) recording 15.2 mm in the hour ending 22:00 UTC, and reports of a tornado at Lakenheath.

12th to 14th: With low pressure over the UK, England had some very unsettled days with showers or longer spells of rain. It was windy too with gusts to 50 or 60 m.p.h. in some exposed southern areas. Temperatures were generally below average.

15th to 16th: Higher pressure brought much drier conditions, especially to eastern England where there was some pleasant sunshine. However, by the end of the 16th, heavy rain was spreading back into the west.

17th to 23rd: Low pressure returned, with very unsettled and at times windy conditions. There were rain or showers, and many of the showers were heavy with thunder, especially for northern and eastern England. Showers became less frequent from the west on the 22nd. A ridge of high pressure brought drier and sunnier conditions on the 23rd after a very chilly night for August. Temperatures fell to 4.8 °C at Fontmell Magna (Dorset), but rose to near average values in most places in sunshine during the day. Cloud and rain spread to many western areas later.

24th to 25th: Low pressure near Iceland with westerly winds. Weather fronts moving east brought outbreaks of rain, but these were generally lighter than on recent days and eventually brought in warmer and more humid

conditions.

26th to 31st: High pressure to the south brought mostly dry conditions. However, with high humidity and westerly winds, it was generally very cloudy or dull with disappointing daytime temperatures and very mild nights. Some cloud breaks did develop in the south on the 30th and it became locally warm by day, with Kew Gardens (London) recording a temperature of 26.9 °C. A return to unsettled conditions on the 31st, but not before sunshine brought a hot day to parts of East Anglia with temperatures reaching 26.2 °C at Wattisham (Suffolk). However, thundery rain spread north-eastwards with some torrential downpours across parts of London and Norfolk during the afternoon and evening, with Hampstead (London) recording 35.2 mm. It turned cooler from the west in the rain.

Wales diary of highlights

Very unsettled with heavy rain or showers for much of the month. It was also an exceptionally dull month.

1st to 6th: Rather unsettled through the first few days with scattered showers or longer periods of rain, although these were interspersed with some brighter periods. The 4th was largely dry and sunny with a weak ridge of high pressure building. The wet weather returned on the 5th and 6th with some heavy rain, especially in the south. Temperatures generally near average, although Colwyn Bay (Conwy) recorded a temperature of 23.2 °C on the 6th.

7th to 13th: Unsettled on the 7th with showers or spells of rain, with reports of a tornado in Abergavenny (Monmouthshire). Drier and brighter on the 8th, but still a few showers. The heavy rain returned on the 9th, with Capel Curig (Conwy) recording 58.8 mm on the 9th. Further rain fell overnight and on the 10th, and it was also quite windy. The 11th was bright with scattered, locally heavy showers, and quite windy. Further rain spread through overnight with brighter showery conditions on the 12th, then heavy rain and strong winds on the 13th.

14th to 24th: Bright at times on the 14th, but with locally heavy showers developing. Mainly dry and bright on the 15th before further rain arrived during the evening of the 15th, and continued through the 16th. The 17th was brighter, but still with some showers. The 18th was a wet day, with heavy rain at times, and strong south-westerly winds. The 19th, 20th and 21st continued unsettled with rain or showers, and some brighter spells. Fewer showers on the 22nd as a ridge of high pressure developed. Mainly dry with some sunshine on the 23rd and for much of the 24th, but further rain arrived in the west later on the 24th. Swyddffynnon (Ceredigion) recorded a minimum temperature of 3.6 °C on the 15th.

25th to 31st: Some rain at first on the 25th, but becoming brighter and warmer in the east. Generally cloudy on the 26th, 27th and 28th with some drizzle, mainly over western hills and only limited brightness in the east. Mainly dry, but rather cloudy on the 29th with isolated drizzle in the west and winds falling light. The 30th was much brighter and warm with a lot more sunshine for most parts, and just a few showers in the far west later. Prestatyn (Denbighshire) recorded a temperature of 24.5 °C on the 30th. A foggy start in places on the 31st, then it was a generally cloudy day with bands of rain or showers.

Scotland diary of highlights

A very dull and wet month for much of the country, although drier and sunnier than average across Orkney and Shetland.

1st to 5th: Heavy rain early on the 1st, with flooding reported at Kilbirnie (Ayrshire). The 1st to the 3rd were then bright with scattered torrential showers, with 16.4 mm being recorded in one hour at Stornoway (Western Isles) on the 2nd. On the 4th showers were more confined to the north and east, with the south-west staying mainly sunny. The 5th was mainly dry with some sunshine while patchy rain spread to the south.

6th to 8th: The 6th and 7th were cloudy with heavy rain in the south and east, with 85.1 mm in 48 hours at Edinburgh Royal Botanic Gardens leading to flooding. However, the far north and north-west were mostly dry and bright with around 25 hours of sun at Lerwick over the two days, and most places were dry on the 8th.

9th to 21st: Rain on the 9th was followed by drier and brighter weather, but with heavy thundery showers affecting the Central Lowlands southwards during the evening and night. Flooding was reported across parts of Fife, with Cupar recording 50.2 mm. The heavy rain became confined to the north-east then the Northern Isles on the 10th. A remarkable daily rainfall record was set at Fair Isle, with 101.2 mm recorded in 24 hours. The 11th was mainly cloudy with showers, some prolonged in the west. On the 12th rain spread from the south and became slow-moving over central Scotland in the evening. Leuchars (Fife) recorded 32.1 mm and flooding was again reported in this area. The 13th to the 15th saw further torrential thunderstorms caused flooding in parts of the Central Lowlands and the south, while Shetland stayed mainly dry and sunny. Altnaharra (Highland) recorded a minimum temperature of 0.5 °C on the 15th. The 16th was wet in the south-west, elsewhere it was mainly dry with some sunshine. Brighter with scattered showers on the 17th. The 18th was cloudier with showers or longer outbreaks of rain, though Shetland was sunny. The 19th and 20th were wet in the south, with flooding especially in Lanarkshire and West Lothian. Salsburgh (North Lanarkshire) recorded 57.0 mm on the 19th. The heaviest rain on the 21st was over the north of the Highlands and the north-east. Away from the extreme north this was an exceptionally dull period, with Eskdalemuir (Dumfries & Galloway) recording around 16 hours for these 13 days.

22nd to 25th: The 22nd was dry and bright in the west, while the east was cloudier with a few showers. The 23rd was mainly fine with some sunshine in the east and temperatures up to 20 °C in places, before rain spread to western areas later. The rain cleared eastwards on the 24th to sunshine and scattered showers. Heavy and persistent rain affected the north-west through the morning of the 25th, with Lusa (Skye) recording 28.0 mm. The rain became lighter as it moved eastwards to leave a bright afternoon with sunny spells and scattered showers.

26th to 31st: A mostly cloudy and humid spell of weather, with some patchy light rain or drizzle, however some sunny intervals developed, especially in the north-east. The temperature reached 24.4 °C at Lossiemouth (Moray) on the 30th. Rain spread eastwards on the 31st.

Northern Ireland diary of highlights

An exceptionally wet and dull month.

1st to 8th: The 1st to the 3rd were bright with heavy showers, some thundery, with 12.4mm falling in an hour at Portglenone (County Antrim) on the evening of the 1st. A better day on the 4th with only isolated showers and some spells of sunshine. A bright start on the 5th soon gave way as cloud and patchy rain spread from the south. The 6th and 7th were mainly cloudy with rain or showers, locally torrential on the 6th with 15.6 mm recorded in one hour at Ballypatrick Forest (County Antrim). Showers died out on the 8th.

9th to 18th: Rain, locally heavy, crossed all parts during the morning of the 9th, followed by drier and brighter weather. Killowen recorded a temperature of 24.3 °C on the 9th. Heavy thundery showers affected the south and east during the evening. Rather cloudy on the 10th and 11th with frequent showers across all areas, some heavy. Heavy overnight rain continued into the 12th with flooding reported in County Down and County Armagh. The 13th started dry but heavy showers and isolated thunderstorms developed by afternoon, again these causing some localised flooding. Further showers or outbreaks of rain, occasionally heavy, on the 14th and 15th, but not as heavy as previous days. On the 16th a band of prolonged and very heavy rain led to widespread flooding, with Belfast Newforge recording 67.3 mm on the 16th. There was then a brief dry spell until further spells of rain during the afternoon and evening of the 17th. Another cloudy day on the 18th, with showers or longer outbreaks of rain.

19th to 25th: Patchy rain cleared by the afternoon of the 19th with sunny intervals and scattered showers prevailing until the 22nd. Further rain spread from the west on the 23rd. Katesbridge (County Down) recorded a minimum temperature of 3.2 °C on the 23rd. A bright start on the 24th gave way to cloud and patchy rain later. Rather cloudy morning on the 25th with outbreaks of rain clearing east to leave a bright afternoon with the odd shower. Cloudy on the 26th with further outbreaks of rain.

26th to 31st: Generally cloudy with outbreaks of patchy light rain or drizzle, but dry for much of the time. Humid, with temperatures reaching 21.8 °C on the 29th at both Ballykelly (County Londonderry) and Ballypatrick Forest. Drizzle cleared east on the 31st with some long awaited sunnier skies spreading from the west to end the month.

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